



WISCONSIN

**DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**  
Division of Workforce Solutions  
Bureau of Workforce Programs

**TO: Economic Support Supervisors  
Economic Support Lead Workers  
Training Staff  
Child Care Coordinators  
W-2 Agencies**

**FROM:** Stephen M. Dow  
Employment Support Unit  
Workforce Policy Development Section

**BWP OPERATIONS MEMO**

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**Non W-2** ☒ **W-2** ☐ **CC** ☐

**PRIORITY:** Medium

**SUBJECT: CONVERSION PLANNING – CARETAKER SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM**

**Note:** Please share this memo with all staff who perform intake or eligibility functions for public assistance benefits. Further information about the change in CTS administration will be detailed in subsequent Operations Memos.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** See the milestone table at the end of this memo.

**PURPOSE**

This memo provides information about the movement of the Caretaker Supplement to CARES.

**BACKGROUND**

The SSI Caretaker Supplement (CTS) is a cash benefit paid to parents receiving SSI who are caretakers of their children (by birth or adoption). This benefit consists of cash only in the amount of \$250 per month for the first child and \$150 per month for any child thereafter. The children must meet the eligibility requirements that were in place in Wisconsin for the now defunct AFDC cash benefit. Additionally, if both parents are in the home, both must be receiving SSI for the dependent children to be CTS eligible. Only one of these parents will receive CTS benefits for any child, however.

CTS benefits have been paid in Wisconsin since December 1997 to cases that formerly received AFDC and since January 1998 to cases that would have received AFDC had it continued to exist. The overall intent of the CTS benefit is to provide financial assistance to SSI parents who are not eligible for Wisconsin Works (W2) cash benefits and who are caring for their own minor or dependent 18-year-old children.

CTS is not a Medicaid benefit. For administrative reasons, CTS has been paid to eligible SSI parents based on information from a combination of sources, including CARES and the DHFS SSI data base.

To (1) insure that payments occur in a timely manner and are made only to eligible SSI parents, (2) insure proper notice of eligibility and payment award and (3) simplify federal reporting of use of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds, CTS will become a program of assistance in CARES in January 2002.

### **CTS IN CARES**

The conversion of CTS payments from a database system with some eligibility requirements checked by EDS to a program of assistance in CARES will accomplish several major tasks:

1. All CTS cases will be maintained within CARES for all eligibility components (financial and non-financial). EDS will simply act as the check printer and EFT intermediary on CTS payments. EDS will continue to tack the CTS payment amount (as determined and transmitted to EDS by CARES) on to SSI payments to SSI recipients.
2. CARES will systematically transmit CTS payment information to EDS twice per month.
3. CARES and CARES ES workers will generate client notices regarding CTS, including award, reduction, termination and recoupment and manual payment.
4. CARES will set review dates and alert ES workers to due dates for CTS client reviews.
5. CARES will maintain CTS eligibility, grant amount and eligible children on screen ECRD. ES workers will not need to enter CTS income on AFUI after ACT date in February 2002.
6. CARES will contain all information required by DWD for CTS TANF reporting to the federal government.
7. This automation will set the correct categorical eligibility for Food Stamp cases and update CARES screen ANBR with SSI eligibility information.

During Phase I of CTS implementation in CARES, CARES will not be capable of systematically generating manual payments (auxiliary benefits in unusual cases) or effecting recoupment of overpayments. ES workers will authorize these adjustments via fax to EDS and EDS will make the payment or establish the recoupment against future CTS/SSI benefits.

### **CASE CATEGORIES**

CTS will be available to ES workers in the CARES production environment beginning Monday, January 28, 2002. Immediately prior to that date, screen ACPA will be defaulted to "Y" (Yes) for "requesting CTS" beginning the month of March, 2002 (0302), for all cases in CARES that are known as having been recipients of CTS in February 2002. This group of cases can be described as comprised of **Category 1 and 2** cases (see following).

#### **CATEGORY 1 CASES**

Category 1 cases are those that were receiving AFDC in November 1997 and, regardless of the category of Medicaid eligibility of the children in the case, were administratively transferred to the CTS database maintained by Deloitte Consulting. This group has been historically referred to as "grand-fathered" for CTS, although this is somewhat of a misnomer, since eligibility requirements for AFDC cash must still be met by these cases. Some cases may lose CTS eligibility when converted to CARES production due to excess income or assets for the AG size.

*CATEGORY 2 CASES*

Cases in this category are those that would have been eligible for AFDC had it continued to exist after November 1997. This group has been historically referred to as “new” cases for CTS. Since the children in these cases are currently meeting AFDC eligibility requirements and receiving AFDC Medicaid (MA-R), it is unlikely that conversion alone will result in termination of CTS eligibility for any of these children.

*CATEGORY 3 CASES*

Category 3 cases were receiving AFDC in November 1997, and were administratively transferred to the CTS database maintained as part of the CARES project, but have since had their cases closed in CARES. On a monthly basis, approximately 600 children are in these cases. This group has been historically referred to as “grand-fathered cases closed in CARES”.

**CONVERSION TO CARES**

To support the conversion of CTS to a program of assistance in CARES, local ES workers will be supplied, by December 15, 2001, with the following:

1. Case lists by county, agency and ES worker identifying CTS cases open in CARES for some other program of assistance (Category 1 and 2 cases).
2. Case lists by county of cases closed in CARES that are in Category 3.

*CONVERSION OF CATEGORY 1 & 2 CASES*

EDS will send a letter to all Category 1 and 2 cases prior to February 2002 informing them that beginning with benefits for March 2002, local agencies will be determining CTS eligibility and benefit amounts using CARES. A copy of this letter will be provided to local agencies in a later Operations Memo.

Beginning January 28, 2002, ES workers will find ACPA defaulted to “Y” for all CTS cases already in CARES. As of September 2001, 6,047 cases open in CARES were receiving CTS income. These are all Category 1 or Category 2 CTS cases and will be subject to conversion. ES workers are instructed to do the following with each case, **in the order listed**:

1. On converted cases, do not change the override filing date on ACPA for CTS. Doing so will duplicate CTS payments already made to a case prior to March 2002. For converted cases (Category 1 and 2 cases, above) ES workers should not be determining CTS eligibility for months prior to March 2002 using CARES.
2. Prior to ACT date in February 2002, end date any CTS income listed on AFUI as OT or OTFS. Notes: It is important that the ES worker end date, rather than delete, this income. The ES worker should also be certain that OT income that is end dated is the CTS cash benefit, not some other unearned income.
3. Run and confirm eligibility for CTS for March 2002. This will establish the CTS payment amount in CARES that can be read by other programs of assistance for their eligibility determinations. Note: CTS verification requirements in CARES mirror the former AFDC verification requirements.

4. Confirm eligibility for other programs of assistance, such as FS and CC for March 2002 prior to ACT date in February 2002. Be sure to check that other programs of assistance have been determined correctly. Do not confirm incorrect benefits.

#### CONVERSION OF CATEGORY 3 CASES

The DHFS will pay CTS benefits to Category 3 cases through February 2002 based on determinations made without ES worker intervention.

**NOTE:** *For CTS benefits to be paid to Category 3 cases for March 2002 and subsequent months, these cases must be opened in CARES and their CTS eligibility confirmed, prior to ACT date in February 2002.*

By January 1, 2002 the DHFS will send Category 3 case heads information about this change, including an application form for CTS. A copy of this information letter will be provided to local agencies in a later Operations Memo. Also by December 15, 2001 the DHFS will provide a report to each local ES agency detailing the case head name, child(ren's) names, SSI mailing address and known phone numbers for each of these cases.

Category 3 case heads will be informed that their completed CTS application must be sent back to their local agency no later than February 1, 2002. Caseheads will be provided with a return mail envelope addressed to their local agency. DHFS will monitor CARES activity regarding these case heads and terminate CTS benefits to CTS recipients (and send notice of termination of benefits beginning March 1, 2002) who were mailed an application and did not return it by ACT date in February. For all Category 3 cases in which the worker confirms CTS eligibility or denial prior to the ACT date in February 2002, CARES will generate a notice of eligibility or denial.

#### **PROCESSING APPLICATIONS FOR CTS FOR NEW (NOT CATEGORY 1, 2 OR 3) CASES**

Beginning January 28, 2002, ES workers will be able to run eligibility for **new CTS applications** back to January 1998.

However, ES workers are strongly cautioned to verify whether CTS benefits have already been paid to a parent for any of the retroactive months for which eligibility is being run. These are cases that are not listed on the Category 1, 2 or 3 case lists sent to counties in December 2001. ES workers should not enter CTS income on AFUI for these cases. ES workers will find that ACPA is defaulted to "Y" for CTS for all new cases.

**NOTE:** If a ES worker runs eligibility in CARES by passing dates for any program for any month prior to March 2002 and does not end date any CTS income on AFUI for the month they are determining eligibility, CTS income may be counted twice for that month (once for any month it is listed on AFUI and once for any month systematically determined by CARES). This is especially important for Food Stamp cases. The CARES budget screen EFTG has been enhanced to include a separate line for CTS income.

## ONGOING CASELOAD MANAGEMENT

Once confirmed in CARES, all CTS eligibility must be reviewed every six months. These reviews may be non-face-to-face. Streamlined CTS review forms will be available to local agencies prior to March 1, 2002.

If an ES worker identifies that a CTS overpayment or incorrect payment has been made for any child(ren) for any month(s), the ES worker must complete a recoupment form (DWS-12828) and fax it to EDS at 608-221-0991. The ES worker should also make a comment on ACCC in CARES noting the details of this recoupment. The ES worker must also send a manual notice of overpayment or incorrect payment to the SSI parent. EDS will set up the overpayment or incorrect payment as a recoupment against future SSI or CTS payments to the parent. EDS will be referring any SSI parent with questions or a request for waiver of CTS recoupment to his or her local ES worker.

If a ES worker needs to run CTS eligibility for specific dates using CARES (running with dates), eligibility will show on CARES eligibility screens. However, this information will not be systematically transmitted to EDS for payment. These instances must be made known to EDS manually. The ES worker must complete a CTS manual payment form (DWS-12825) and fax it to EDS at 608-221-0991. The ES worker must also populate CARES screen ACMP with information about each instance of manual payment and provide notice to the client about the benefits that will be received.

There may also be instances in the future where CARES is unable to systematically transmit eligibility for past months in a particular case. The manual payment process described in the paragraph above may also be used for this purpose. However, manual payments may be generated only when CARES cannot or fails to transmit a payment to EDS, not simply to get a payment to the case head sooner than the general monthly payment cycle.

Verification of financial and non-financial information is required for CTS as it is for other cash assistance programs. The ES worker should be using a “?” and “NV” to pend or fail the CTS AG for lack of verification. If the CTS case is also open in Medicaid, the ES worker may also need to use “Q?” and “QV” as with any type of Medicaid case.

The following chart summarizes the circumstances under which the ES worker uses each verification code to pend or fail different programs of assistance.

Verification Code	Medicaid				CTS & Other Programs
	SSN Citizenship Alien Status Pregnancy Disability	Assets For Elderly & Disabled	Assets For Family MA	All other Items	
?	Pend	Pend	Pass	Pass	Pend
NV	Fail	Fail	Pass	Pass	Fail
Q?	Pend	Pend	Pend	Pend	Pend
QV	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail

***CTS PAYMENT HISTORY PRIOR TO MARCH 2002***

Beginning January 28, 2002, all ES workers who have access to the WIOL subsystem in EDSNET will also have access to the WSSI subsystem in EDSNET. The viewable screens in this subsystem contain information about federal and state SSI, SSI-E and CTS eligibility and payment history. This information is being provided to ES workers so that they can correctly update CARES screen ANBR with SSI eligibility information. However, ES workers are strongly encouraged to rely on SOLQ for SSI eligibility and payment information whenever possible. Note: SOLQ does not contain information about SSI state supplement only cases in Wisconsin; this is where information on WSSI will be essential to the ES worker. SSI state supplementation only recipients who are parents may also qualify for CTS.

ES workers must maintain the privacy of all information viewed on WSSI and record information found on WSSI only for case specific reasons

***ROLE OF EDS DURING AND AFTER CONVERSION OF CTS***

Beginning with benefits for March 2002, the role of EDS will be to simply add the CTS payment amount determined and transmitted from CARES for each CTS parent's state SSI check. EDS will not be making any decisions about CTS eligibility, payment amount, recoupment or manual payment beginning March 1, 2002. Any SSI recipient who contacts the State SSI Unit at EDS regarding a CTS eligibility, payment or recoupment question or concern will be directed to contact his or her ES worker or the local agency (in the case of a caller who self-identifies as not currently receiving CTS).

EDS runs a payment cycle for SSI benefits 4 times per month. In most cases, a recipient of SSI receives a single SSI check or receives an EFT to his or her bank account on the first of the month. Only when SSI benefits are recalculated are payments (check or EFT) made at other times of the month.

CARES will transmit CTS benefit information to EDS twice per month. The SSI payment cycle that coincides with the CARES ACT date will contain the majority of CTS benefits for the following month. Approximately one week later (immediately prior to the benefit issuance "pull-down" date) CARES will transmit any additional cases that are payable for the following month.

***CHANGES TO AUTOMATIC UPDATING OF ANBR AND ANBC***

To assist all ES workers by providing accurate and current information about SSI eligibility, CARES screens ANBR and ANBC will be automatically updated, weekly, with the most current information available from the federal Social Security Administration and DHFS. ES workers are reminded that only parents who are receiving cash SSI payments as either a federal/state SSI recipient or a state-only recipient may qualify for CTS for their eligible children. Parents who receive Medicaid under provisions of sec. 1619(b) of the Social Security Act are not qualified for CTS benefits because they are not receiving cash SSI benefits.

***TRAINING***

The DWD Training Unit will be coordinating CTS training events at regional and local agency sites during January and February 2002. Information about specific training dates will be provided to local agencies in late November or early December 2001.

**CONVERSION MILESTONES**

DATE	MILESTONE
December 15, 2001	DHFS sends case lists of CTS recipients by local, agency and ES worker to local agencies for Category 1-2 and Category 3 cases.
January 1, 2002	DHFS/EDS sends letter to all CTS caretaker parents informing them of changes in their case (all categories of CTS cases) and need to complete an application form for CTS (for Category 3 cases only).
January 25, 2002	Second Operations Memo detailing CTS screens in CARES and MMIS Overview describing access and screens in the WSSI subsystem of EDSNET sent to local agencies.
January 25, 2002	All Category 1 and 2 cases in CARES defaulted to "Y" for CTS on screen ACPA.
January 28, 2002	CTS available in CARES as a Program of Assistance.
January 28, 2001 through ACT date in February 2002	Local agencies enter Category 3 cases in CARES as application forms arrive at local agencies.
January 28, 2002	WSSI (SSI State Supplement Payment System) available to all ES workers who have access to EDSNET.
January 28, 2002 through ACT date in February 2002	ES workers convert Category 1 and 2 cases by end dating CTS income on AFUI, running SFED or SFEX for March 2002, confirming CTS eligibility, then running and confirming eligibility for other programs of assistance for March 2002.
ACT Date in February 2002	Deadline for confirmation of converted Category 1, 2 and 3 cases for March 1, 2002 payment of CTS.
February 1, 2002	CTS mail-in application and review forms available to local agencies.

**CONTACT**

DES CARES Information and Problem Resolution Center

Email: [carpolcc@dwd.state.wi.us](mailto:carpolcc@dwd.state.wi.us)  
 Phone: 608-261-6317 (Option #1)  
 Fax: 608-266-8358

**Note:** Email contacts are preferred. Thank you.